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MELFORD RURAL DISTRICT

in the

Administrative County of West Suffolk



Annual Report

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the year

1953

To the Chairman and Members
of the
Melford Rural District Council

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit for your consideration the Annual Report on the Public Health and Sanitary Conditions of the Melford Rural District for the year 1953.

The Vital Statistics for the district are encouraging and approximate closely to the figures for the Country as a whole. It will be noted that again no deaths resulted from the Notifiable Diseases. Apart from a severe outbreak of Measles during the third quarter of the year, the period was pleasingly free from infectious diseases.

Special attention was paid during the year to the clean handling of food and strenuous efforts made by the Public Health Committee to secure an improvement in the transport of meat.


Some progress was made in the sewerage of the district but the thoroughly unsatisfactory conditions which exist in Long Melford and Bures continue or even worsen.

I wish to thank the chairman and members of the Public Health Committee for their encouragement during the year. The Clerk of the Council, Mr. J. A. Shaw, the Surveyor and Senior Sanitary Inspector, Mr. J. A. E. Burrows, and the Water Engineer, Mr. H. J. Harrington, have given willing assistance for which I am most grateful.

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

G. P. BARCLAY,
Medical Officer of Health.



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SECTION A.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Figures in brackets relate to the previous year

Area of the District	47,270 acres
Rateable Value	(£48,134) £49,337
Sum represented by a Penny Rate (£200 7s. 2d.)	£203 9s. 5d.
Number of Inhabited Houses... ..	(4208)*4344
Population (Registrar General's Estimate)	(12,920) 12,930

* This figure includes Hutment accommodation

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births :

	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	(85) 94	(91) 89	(176) 183
Illegitimate	(6) 3	(4) 8	(10) 11
Totals ...	(91) 97	(95) 97	(186) 194

Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated population (crude) ...	(14.4)	15.0
Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population (adjusted)	(14.8)	15.45
Birth Rate per 1,000 population (England & Wales)	(15.3)	15.5
Illegitimate Birth Rate... ..	(4.8%)	5.6%

Still Births :

	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	(2) 1	(0) 1	(2) 2
Illegitimate	(—) —	(—) —	(—) —
Totals ...	(2) 1	(0) 1	(2) 2

Still Birth Rate per 1,000 population	(0.15)	0.15
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 population (England and Wales)... ..	(0.35)	0.35

Deaths :

	Male		Female		Total	
	(97)	86	(73)	65	(170)	151
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population (crude)					(13.2)	11.68
Death Rate per 1,000 estimated population (adjusted)					(10.3)	9.11
Death Rate per 1,000 population (England & Wales)					(11.3)	11.4
Deaths from Pregnancy, Childbirth and Abortion ...						Nil

Number of deaths of infants under one year of age :

					Male		Female		Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	(3)	2	(3)	—	(6) 2
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	(—)	—	(—)	2	(—) 2
Totals					(3)	2	(3)	2	(6) 4

Death Rate of infants under one year of age :

(a) All infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	(32.7)	20.6
(b) All Infants England and Wales	...	...	...	(27.6)	26.8

Death of Infants under four weeks of age :

					Male		Female		Total
Legitimate	...	...	...	...	(1)	2	(2)	—	(3) 2
Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	(—)	—	(—)	1	(—) 1
Totals					(1)	2	(2)	1	(3) 3

CAUSES OF DEATH

Disease				Male			Female		Total
Measles	...	...	...	(0)	0	...	(0)	0	(0) 0
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	(0)	0	...	(0)	0	(0) 0
Diphtheria	...	...	...	(0)	0	...	(0)	0	(0) 0
Influenza	...	...	...	(0)	3	...	(0)	2	(0) 5
Cancer (all types)	...	...	...	(11)	7	...	(10)	3	(21) 10
Vascular Lesions									
of the nervous system				(14)	10	...	(18)	14	(32) 24
Heart Disease (all forms)	...			(31)	24	...	(25)	29	(56) 53
Pneumonia	...	...	...	(4)	2	...	(4)	2	(8) 4
Bronchitis	...	...	...	(7)	2	...	(2)	0	(9) 2
Ulcer of Stomach or									
Duodenum				(1)	1	...	(1)	0	(2) 1
Nephritis	...	...	...	(2)	2	..	(1)	1	(3) 3
Accidents									
(not motor vehicles)				(3)	4	...	(1)	1	(4) 5
Accidents (Motor Vehicle)				(1)	1	...	(0)	0	(1) 1
Suicide	...	...	...	(1)	3	...	(0)	0	(1) 3
Other defined and									
ill-defined diseases				(18)	27	...	(10)	13	(28) 40
Total				(93)	86		(72)	65	(165) 151

SECTION B.

1. Public Health Staff

Medical Officer of Health, who also serves other districts.

Senior Sanitary Inspector, whole time, J. A. E. Burrows,
Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

Additional Sanitary Inspector, whole time, I. V. Hazell,
Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

2. Ambulance Facilities

The West Suffolk County Council are responsible for the ambulance service which is carried on through the agency of the West Suffolk Branch of the British Red Cross Society.

3. Nursing in the Home

The West Suffolk County Council's Home Nursing and Midwifery service supply six District Nurses.

4. The West Suffolk County Council provide five Infant Welfare Centres in the District at Long Melford, Glemsford, Bures, Nayland and Gt. Waldingfield.

5. Laboratory Facilities

The Public Health Laboratory Service, directed by the Medical Research Council at Ipswich has given the district very generous service.

The Public Analyst for the County has given reports on the analysis of the water in the area.

SECTION C.

PUBLIC WATER SUPPLIES

The following Report is submitted by Mr. H. J. Harrington, the Council's Water Engineer :

During the year ended 31st December, 1953, main water supplies were made available to serve properties situate in the outlying parts of the Parishes of Assington, Bures, Leavenheath and Wissington, and a section of 3in. main was installed to serve properties at Withermarsh Green, Stoke-by-Nayland.

Main water supplies were available in all Parishes in the area, and the Council considered Schemes for the extension of mains to serve outlying agricultural holdings.

At the end of the year there were 2,025 properties with laid-on water supplies, and 1,512 properties were being served by standpipe supplies, making a total number of 3,537 properties supplied in the District.

Below is set out detailed information relating to each Parish.

Parish			Laid-on Supplies	Standpipe Supplies	Total No. of Properties connected
Acton	...	...	51	52	103
Alpheton	...	...	37	18	55
Assington	...	...	58	37	95
Bures St. Mary...	...	...	141	71	212
Boxted	...	...	25	0	25
Great Cornard	...	...	362	90	452
Little Cornard	...	...	38	31	69
Chilton	...	...	19	22	41
Glemsford	...	...	161	389	550
Hartest	...	...	79	35	114
Lawshall	...	...	72	63	135
Leavenheath	...	...	41	38	79
Nayland with Wissington	...	...	156	30	186
Newton	...	...	53	32	85
Stoke-by-Nayland	...	...	127	80	207
Shimpling	...	...	55	23	78
Stanstead	...	...	33	49	82
Somerton	...	...	17	15	32
Long Melford	...	...	402	333	735
Great Waldingfield	...	...	49	83	132
Little Waldingfield	...	...	49	21	70
Totals			2,025	1,512	3,537

The consumption per head per day of the Population served on the various Schemes is as follows:

Central Area Scheme—Source of Supply, Great Cornard Bore—

Serving the Parishes of Great and Little Cornard, Long Melford, Acton, Great and Little Waldingfield, Newton and Leavenheath—13.5 gallons per head per day.

Stoke-by-Nayland Scheme—

Serving the Parishes of Stoke-by-Nayland and Nayland with Wissington—11 gallons per head per day.

Northern Area Water Scheme—

Water purchased in bulk from the Thingoe Rural District Council, serving the Parishes of Glemsford, Stanstead, Boxted, Hartest, Somerton, Lawshall, Shimpling and Alpheton—11.60 gallons per head per day.

Bures Scheme—

The supply for the above-mentioned Parish is purchased in bulk from the Lexden and Winstree Rural District Council—12 gallons per head per day.

None of the water from any of these sources shows a tendency to have a plumbo-solvent action.

Examination of Supplies.

During the year ten samples of water were taken from new mains and from other points of supply and upon examination were found to be fit for domestic consumption.

The total amount of water supplied during the year for domestic and non-domestic purposes was 92,228,000 gallons.

REPORT OF MR. J. A. E. BURROWS, SURVEYOR AND SENIOR SANITARY INSPECTOR.

WATER SUPPLIES—Private.

Thirteen water samples from ten sources were taken during the year. Twelve were submitted to bacteriological examination only. Four shallow wells serving a total of sixteen cottages were found to be polluted. These cottages were later provided with a piped water supply from the Council's mains. Proposals for utilising a pond and a stream for providing a water supply to two farms were proved to be undesirable and the schemes were abandoned.

No statutory notices were served.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The sewer for the village of Acton was completed in the early part of the year, but because of the persistent infiltration of surface water was not approved for general use until the autumn. Except for the Council's new housing site and hutments held under requisition only four properties had been connected by the end of the year.

In December work commenced on the provision of sewerage for the parish of Nayland-with-Wissington. This is the first of the schemes which, when completed, will provide sewers for all the larger villages along the Stour valley from Stoke-by-Nayland to Glemsford. It is much to be regretted that the proposals for the parishes of Bures, Long Melford and Glemsford have made so little progress, as the drainage problems in these parishes are increasing with every new house which is built. The continuance of the long lengths of "sewer ditches," which are nothing but open cesspools, in Long Melford and Glemsford and the constant discharge of filth into the River Stour under the bridge at Bures are very disturbing facts. The absence of sewers is preventing further housing development by the Council in these parishes, and the constant emptying of cesspools on the existing post-war estates is a heavy burden.

There are four small disposal works in the District serving Council housing sites. While these are an improvement on cesspools their small size and often isolated positions make it difficult to service them as often as is necessary and the effluents are generally far from satisfactory.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

With the exception of Long Melford with its weekly collection all parishes have a fortnightly service. The tendency of house refuse to increase in bulk has been aggravated by the breakdown of paper salvage schemes. This factor has also had a bearing on the intermittent complaints received from one parish which has a very wind-swept refuse tip within its boundaries.

In the comparatively near future new tips will have to be found. The lack of them in the southern area is particularly unfortunate as long haulages are necessitated by the present arrangements.

Following representations from various parishes the Council has decided that in future there must be no break in the service while the staff are on holiday and the vehicles undergoing their annual overhaul.

CESSPOOL EMPTYING SERVICE.

The following figures give a comparison between the years 1952 and 1953, and in each case denote number of emptyings:

Year		Cesspools Council Estate		Cesspools Private		Privies
1952	...	1,665	...	458	...	73
1953	...	1,985	...	543	...	66

The increase of Council Estate work reflects the progress of the Council's housing programme, and the continuing lack of sewers. During each working day the Council's vehicles transported approximately 12,250 gallons of sewage, an increase of over 2,000 gallons on the corresponding figure for 1951.

Three hundred and eighty private houses were serviced during the year, distributed as follows:

Acton	...	...	...	...	12
Alpheton	...	...	...	...	4
Assington	...	...	...	...	6
Boxted	..	...	...	...	1
Bures	...	...	...	...	8
Chilton	...	...	...	...	16
Glemsford	...	...	...	...	14
Great Cornard	...	...	...	...	134
Great Waldingfield	...	...	...	...	20
Hartest	...	...	...	...	14
Lawshall	...	...	...	...	4
Leavenheath	...	...	...	...	7
Little Cornard	...	...	...	...	10
Little Waldingfield	...	...	...	...	8
Long Melford	...	...	...	...	43
Nayland	...	...	...	...	18
Newton	...	...	...	...	18
Shimpling, Somerton and Stanstead	...	...	...	...	14
Stoke and Wissington	...	...	...	...	29

380

NIGHT-SOIL COLLECTION.

Pail closets were emptied once per week in the parishes of Long Melford, Glemsford (part), Great Cornard, Chilton (part) and Bures St. Mary.

The staffing difficulties referred to in the 1952 Report became acute this year, and resulted in the Council putting the work out to contract from the beginning of September. To date this has operated very successfully, and complaints which had been very frequent are now extremely rare.

NUISANCES.

No statutory action was required.

HOUSING ACT, 1936.

No statutory actions were taken under Sections 9 and 11.

FOOD INSPECTION.

The following table gives details of Meat Inspection carried out at the Bures Slaughterhouse. This shows that 96.8% of all animals killed received a post-mortem inspection.

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

			Cattle exclud- ing Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number Killed	...	...	2166	377	946	5901	5581
Number Inspected	...	...	2157	377	888	5543	5529

All Diseases except Tuberculosis.

Whole carcases condemned	...	4	—	—	13	41
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	...	521	89	3	157	112
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis		24.3	23.6	0.3	3.1	2.8

Tuberculosis Only.

Whole carcases condemned	...	11	5	1	—	4
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	...	133	51	—	—	128
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	...	6.7	14.9	0.1	—	2.4

At wholesale and retail shops the following foodstuffs were found to be unfit for human consumption :

Calf Carcase	...	...	...	1
Geese	...	...	...	3
Beef	...	...	...	429 lbs.
Pork	..	...	...	29 lbs.
Bacon	...	..	...	31 lbs.
Welsh Rarebit	...	...	...	12 jars
Meat Products	...	...	...	13 tins
Fish Products	...	...	...	11 tins
Milk Products	...	...	...	32 tins
Vegetable Products		...	...	28 tins
Fruit Products	...	...	...	45 tins

FOOD PREMISES.

Butchers' Shops.

Twelve premises were registered under Section 14, Food and Drugs Act, 1938, for the manufacture of sausages.

Wet Fish and Fried Fish Shops.

Four shops were registered under Section 14, Food and Drugs Act, 1938, for the frying of fish, and one for the smoking of fish.

Sale of Ice Cream.

Twenty-nine premises were registered for the sale of ice cream under Section 14, Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

During the year twenty-three samples were taken from nineteen shops. None of the samples showed evidence of harmful contamination.

Milk and Dairies Regulations, etc.

There were fourteen persons registered as distributors in the District, and five premises (not being dairy farms) were registered as Dairies.

Six dealers were licensed to sell Tuberculin-Tested Milk, and seven to sell Pasteurised Milk.

RODENT CONTROL.

The Council continues to employ one Rodent Operator.

VERMIN DISINFESTATION.

Four premises were treated for fleas and one for bugs.

SECTION G.

Prevalence of Infectious Disease Notified during Year.
CASES NOTIFIED.

				CIVILIAN.			
Disease				1953	1952	1951	1950
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	29	8	5	29
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	67	36	122	9
Measles	...	...	...	358	80	5	114
Diphtheria	...	...	...	0	0	0	0
Acute Pneumonia	...	...	...	32	12	26	4
Erysipelas	...	...	...	6	2	1	3
Ophthalmia — Neonatorum	...	...	...	0	0	0	0
Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	0	0	1	0
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	0	0	0	0
Infective Hepatitis	...	...	...	1	7	1	12
Dysentery	...	...	...	10	0	3	1
Paratyphoid Fever	...	...	...	0	0	1	0
Food Poisoning	...	...	...	1	0	0	0

ANALYSIS OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

Age in Years	SCARLET FEVER			WHOOPING COUGH			MEASLES		
	M	F	Totl.	M	F	Totl.	M	F	Totl.
0—1 ..	—	—	—	1	2	3	2	2	4
1—2 ..	—	—	—	4	2	6	6	2	8
3—4 ..	2	2	4	8	11	19	14	27	41
5—9 ..	9	4	13	9	8	17	61	34	95
10—14 ..	3	6	9	7	9	16	82	79	161
15—25 ..	1	1	2	4	2	6	15	27	42
25 and over	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	4	4
Unknown	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	3
Totals	16	13	29	33	34	67	183	175	358

TUBERCULOSIS

	Pulmonary			Non-Pulmonary			Total all types
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	
No. of cases on register at commencement of year ..	23	24	57	3	9	12	69
No. of cases added during the year	3	6	9	—	3	3	12
No. of cases removed during year	—	1	1	—	3	3	4
No. remaining on register at end of year	26	39	65	3	9	12	77

No action has been called for under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or under Section 1—72 of the Public Health Act, 1936.

SECTION E.—ANTHRAX ORDER, 1938

Several cases of anthrax in livestock were notified. The disposal of the carcasses of these animals, either by deep burial in lime or by incineration, was supervised.

SECTION F.

Prescribed particulars on the administration of the Factories Act, 1937.

PART I. OF THE ACT.

1.—*Inspections* for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number on Register (3)	Number of			M/c line No. (7)
			Inspections (4)	Written notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)	
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	1	13	3			1
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	2	47	7			2
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority, (excluding out- workers' premises)	3		14			3
TOTAL		60	24			

2.—Cases in which *Defects* were found.

(If defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasions they should be reckoned as two, three or more "cases").

Particulars (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted (7)	M/c line No. (8)
		Found (3)	Remedied (4)	To H.M. Inspector (5)	Referred By H.M. Inspector (6)		
Want of cleanliness (S.1) ...	4	...	...	...	...	...	4
Overcrowding (S.2) ...	5	...	...	...	...	...	5
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ...	6	...	...	...	...	...	6
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ...	7	...	...	...	...	...	7
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) ...	8	...	...	...	...	...	8
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)							
(a) insufficient ...	9	...	...	...	...	...	9
(b) Unsuitable or defective ...	10	1	1	...	...	...	10
(c) Not separate for sexes ...	11	...	...	...	...	...	11
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork) ...	12	...	...	...	...	...	12
TOTAL ...		1	1	...	...	...

PART VIII. OF THE ACT.
OUTWORK (Sections 110 and 111).

Nature of Work	M/c line No.	Section 110
		No. of outworkers in August list required by Sec. 110 (1) (c)
Curtains and Furniture Hangings ...	17	1
Fur Pulling	22	25
Box-making, etc.	34	1

SECTION G.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.

Section 47.—Removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention.

No cases presented during the year calling for action in accordance with this Section of the Act.

G. P. BARCLAY, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.

